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TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT

Modern Electronic Espionage Still Relies on Brains, Bravery

By ERNEST CUNEO

WASHINGTON (NANA) — Spying is as old as the scriptures. Like every other human endeavor, it encompasses man's noblest and his most base instincts. Nationals spying for their country in enemy territory are usually noble.

Captain Nathan Hale well knew he was putting his head in a noose when he entered occupied New York City to learn whether the British would flank Gen. Washington by landing in the Bronx. He found they would, but was caught and hanged before he could transmit the information.

British Maj. Andre was no less noble when he was caught with Gen. Benedict Arnold's plans of West Point in his boot. Both men were hanged, depriving them of the uniformed officer's privilege of being shot, as a sign of disdain, not for themselves but for their mission.

This Anglo-Saxon disdain of spying was the official U.S. policy until late in the mid-30s. During World War I, Maj. Fiorello H. La Guardia, in command of the U.S. Fighter Command in Italy, received overtures from friends in Budapest, where he once had been as assistant consul. A secret meeting was arranged in Switzerland, where Hungarian patriots offered to lead a revolt against the Hapsburgs.

CIA Chief's Kin

La Guardia communicated this to Secretary of State Lansing. Lansing cabled sharply that the United States engaged in war, not revolutions. Nothing dramatizes the American change more than the fact that Allen Dulles, chief of CIA, was the nephew of Secretary Lansing.

The United States had almost nothing when President Roosevelt called in Gen. "Wild Bill" Donovan to form the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). The OSS wouldn't have been much if the British hadn't acted as [illegible]

espionage, having been at it for 400 years.

The industrial revolution changed spying completely. From Hale and Andre, up through the Esterhazy accusation against innocent Capt. Dreyfus, and through stupid Mata Hari, espionage centered around stationary fortifications. Fortifications became obsolete. The real base of war became steel. It took the combined genius of Britain's scientists and economists as well as British intelligence to discover Hitler's greatest secret — namely, that he was diverting Ruhr steel production to war material, manufactured in concealed factories.

Electronic Age

When World War II started, a new form of espionage blossomed. It was electronic, and it yielded over 95 per cent of all intelligence information.

Thirty-five thousand trained listeners listened in on Hitler's airwaves, down to Nazi Panzer divisions calling back to their bases for parts. Every bit of information was relevant, and was channeled, urgent, to Research & Analysis (R&A), a group of learned and intuitive men with almost genius perception.

After Gen. Mark Clark's army was waterborne for the Salerno assault, Gen. Donovan's operators, already active with headquarters at Amalfi, flashed that a peasant reported the Germans had established field headquarters, camouflaged as a haystack, for two divisions.

This was transmitted instantly to R&A in Q Building in Washington. It was 36 hours before the attack. R&A gave instant answer: The Air Force was to photograph the area at dawn, when footprints would show up in the dew.

German HQ Destroyed

The Air Force swept across from Africa, "diced" the fields, that is, swooped in at 100 feet and took pictures. The footprints showed up. The position of the German headquarters was established [illegible]

cruiser force; their first salvo blew out the German field headquarters.

For all of science, however, the brave and dedicated man is still the heart of an intelligence organization. After Gen. Clark's army hit the Slerno beaches, heavy German artillery, concealed near the Bay of Naples, started bombardment of the American supply fleet.

When efforts to locate the German batteries failed, Gen. William Donovan called for volunteers to man a PT-boat run in the harbor of Naples to draw the fire of the German guns. Standing in the bow of the speeding PT, Gen. Donovan cooly and calmly pinpointed on a map the flashes of the guns as they fired, as a result of which they were silenced.

When a military spy knows he is about to be caught, as quickly as possible he scrambles into his uniform. If arrested in uniform, he is protected by the Geneva Convention. Both sides observed this pretty well. If he is caught in civilian garb, however, he is likely to welcome death when it comes.

One magnificent young German officer, a brilliant Arabic scholar, was as much at home on a camel in a burnoose as he was in Berlin.

To counter-espionage was reported his one peculiarity — At sundown, he would ride up into the hills and for a considerable time would study a document, believed to be the key list of German operators in North Africa.

That's where they killed him, but the document he clutched wasn't the key list at all. It was the picture of a very pretty girl and on it was written, "Don't be a hero, just come back to me," which, of course, requires no decoding at all.